

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 REYKJA 01067 091724Z  
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 /059 W  
-----054109 100108Z /21

R 091605Z AUG 77  
FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7523  
INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN  
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI  
.AMEMBASSY OSLO 1682  
AMEMBA SY STOCKHOLM

C O N F I D E N T I A L REYKJAVIK 1067

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, IC  
SUBJECT: SOCIAL DEMOCRATS TAKE A CHANCE

SUMMARY: SOCIAL DEMOCRATS' CURRENT SELF-FLAGELLATION  
SUBJECT OF MUCH ATTENTION. SDP REFORMERS HOPE THAT  
HONESTY AND OPENNESS WILL WIN BACK SUPPORT LOST OVER  
LAST SIX YEARS. THIS PRESNETS RISK TO PARTY WHICH  
BARELY SURVIVED GQOUR ELECTIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. CONSIDERABLE PRESS PLAY HAS RECENTLY BEEN GIVEN  
TO DEVELOPMENTS IN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (SDP), ONLY  
ONE OF THREE MAJOR DEMOCRATIC PARTIES NOT IN PRESENT  
COALITION. THIS ATTENTION LARGELY RESULT OF TEMPORARY  
TAKEOVER IN ABSENCE SENIOR EDITOR ON LEAVE OF SDP  
NEWSPAPER BY YOUNG MUCKRAKING EDITOR WHO IS AIRING  
PARTY'S DIRTY LAUNDRY IN PUBLIC. TIMING OF NEWS FLURRY  
COULD NOT BE BETTER FOR YOUNG ACTIVIST WING OF PARTY  
WHICH HOPES TO OUST OLD-LINE REGULARS DURING SERIES OF PRIMARIES  
BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 10.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 REYKJA 01067 091724Z

2. PARTY HAS NOT FARED WELL SINCE IT DEPARTED GOVERNMENT IN  
WHICH IT HAD SHARED POWER WITH INDEPENDENCE PARTY FOLLOWING  
1971 ELECTORAL DEFEAT. ITS PERCENTAGE OF NATIONAL VOTE DE-  
CLINED AGAIN IN 1974 AND WHILE IT STILL HAS FIVE SEATS IN  
PRESENT ALTHING, ONLY ONE WAS DIRCTLY ELECTED. UNDER COMPLI-  
CATED NATIONAL APPORTIONMENT PROCESS, IVF IT HAD LOST 300 VOTES,  
THE SDP, A FIXTURE ON THE POLITICAL SCENE SINCE 1916, WOULD

HAVE BEEN DENIED ANY REPRESENTATION. MEMBERS OF YOUNG SDP  
APPEAR WILLING TO RISK PARTY'S FUTURE IN ELECTIONS EXPECTED  
NEXT SPRING SINCE THEY BELIEVE CORRUPTION, SECRECY, AND  
INDECISION RESPONSIBLE FOR DECLINE IN POPULAR SUPPORT.

3. HOLDING OF PARTY'S FIRST PRIMARIES REPRESENTS VICTORY FOR  
YOUNG ACTIVISTS WHO ARE CONFIDENT THAT TWO, POSSIBLY THREE,  
SDP MPS CAN BE REMOVED. PARTY'S OTHER TWO MPS, BENEDIKT  
GRONDAL, PARTY CHAIRMAN, AND BYLFI GISLASON, CHAIRMAN OF  
PARLIAMENTARY GROUP, ARE CONSIDERED HONEST AND SUPPORTIVE OF  
REFORM. GISLASON, MP SINCE 1946 AND CABINET MINISTER UNDER  
FIVE PRIME MINISTERS, IS QUIETLY BACKING THE REFORMERS AND  
PRIVATELY SAYS THAT HIS FUTURE IN PARTY DEPENDS ON SUCCESS  
OF NEW FACES IN PRIMARIES. FINAL PARTY LIST WILL NOT BE  
KNOWN UNTIL LAST PRIMARY ENDS NOVEMBER 13.

4. SDP FORTUNES ARE GENERALLY REGARDED AS HAVING HIT BOTTOM  
IN LAST ELECTIONS. ORGANIZATION OF LIBERALS AND LEFTISTS,  
SPLINTER PARTY WHICH SIPHONED VOTES FROM SDP, LIKELY EXPECTED  
TO COLLAPSE BEFORE ELECTIONS TO THE BENEFIT OF BOTH PEOPLE'S  
ALLIANCE AND SDP. YOUNG SDP MEMBERS SEEM WILLING TO RISK  
THESE FAVORABLE PROSPECTS FOR SAKE OF CATHARSIS WHICH, THEY  
SAY, WILL HELP RATHER THAN HURT PARTY'S CHANCES IN NATIONAL  
ELECTIONS. WHETHER WITH RISE OF YOUNG SDP'S FOREIGN POLICY  
ORIENTATION OF PARTY WOULD SHIFT AWAY FROM ITS SUPPORT OF NATO  
AND OF IDF PRESENCE IS DOUBTFUL PARTICULARLY IF GISLASON AND  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 REYKJA 01067 091724Z

GRONDAL SURVIVE IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS.  
BLAKE

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** SOCIAL DEMOCRATS, POLITICAL PARTIES, ELECTIONS, POPULAR SUPPORT  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Sent Date:** 09-Aug-1977 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1977REYKJA01067  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D770287-0052  
**Format:** TEL  
**From:** REYKJAVIK  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1977/newtext/t19770881/aaaacqtb.tel  
**Line Count:** 96  
**Litigation Code IDs:**  
**Litigation Codes:**  
**Litigation History:**  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Message ID:** c179635f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Retention:** 0  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 02-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 1662549  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** SOCIAL DEMOCRATS TAKE A CHANCE SUMMARY: SOCIAL DEMOCRATS' CURRENT SELF-FLAGELLATION OF MUCH ATTENTION.  
SDP REFORMERS HOPE THAT  
**TAGS:** PINT, IC  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvkey:** odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/c179635f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009